

COMPANY ASKS HIGH RATE ON NOVEL VALUES

By Attorney Scott Claims Gas
Company Seeks Big Return
on Good Fortune.

A copy of the petition filed by the People's Power company with the Illinois state utilities commission in behalf of its request for an increase in gas rates from \$1 to \$1.25 per 1,000 cubic feet of gas is in the hands of City Attorney J. K. Scott, who points out various details on which the utilities commission will have its fight against the increase in rates.

The company in its petition appraises its holdings at \$3,171,705, but the legal representatives of Rock Island, Moline and East Moline, at the next hearing before the commission May 14, will attempt to prove this figure to be \$1,517,258.

In 1917 the state utilities commission's engineer appraised the company's holdings at \$1,450,000. Since that time the company has expended \$152,288.03 on improvements and has under construction or authorized improvements estimated to cost an additional \$215,000. Adding these figures together the sum of \$3,171,705 is obtained, which would seem to give the fair worth of the company's property.

The City Attorney Scott contends, The City Attorney Scott contends, the difference between this figure and the sum of \$1,517,258, which the company asks the commission to recognize as the value of the property, is made up by company claims of various property and business valuations.

Capitalize Good Fortune.

Among these items the largest is \$275,000, which the company claims should be allowed in the appraisal as established business value. In this contention the company cites a decision of the United States supreme court in which it is set forth that a business fully es-



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established has certain values over a new business, and that utilities companies also should be given the right to appraise their properties so as to get value for growing increases in value of property.

"This item is a new one in my experience in dealing with these cases," City Attorney Scott said. "The courts have handed down the decision referred to by the company and it is evident that the company intends to take advantage of an established business value seems to me to be a case where the company, after enjoying good fortune, has the right to capitalize it and draw a return on it. In other words, the company is enjoying a good business and is now asking to be paid for its enjoyment in addition to the returns received for money actually invested."

The two principal points on which the company bases its petition for an increase in rates are the increased costs for generator fuel and water gas oil. The figures show that last year the company expended \$93,464.19 for generator fuel and that under increased prices the company will

have to expend \$105,068.13 this year, basing the needs on those of last year. This forms an increased cost of \$11,603.94 in this item alone. Last year the company expended \$103,106.93 for water gas oil and estimates that the cost this year will be \$116,069, an increase of \$12,962.07. The sum total of these two items is \$76,566.01. Added to this increase in production is various smaller items. There is no doubt but that the cost of production has gone up to a large extent, but the important matter is to see that we don't pay for gas under the conditions when the basis is made the watered valuation of company property. The utilities commission allows the company a return of 7 per cent on its total investment and the new rate will be figured by taking out the cost of production, depreciation, etc., and then the company will be allowed a return on every dollar allowed by the commission on property valuation.

"The cities have little or no power in these matters. We can only object, but the utilities commission rules, and its decisions are binding. In the present case we

are attempting to drive down the company's valuation to a point more consistent to the valuation set by the utilities commission engineer in 1917."

MEMBERS OF KAABA SHRINE TO ATTEND IOWA CEREMONIAL

Many Rock Island members of Kaaba Shrine of Davenport are planning to attend the ceremonial at What Cheer, Iowa, Wednesday, May 5. A special train will carry the members and visitors to What Cheer, leaving Davenport over the Rock Island railroad at 7 o'clock in the morning.

The train has been chartered free of expense to any member or visitor and all members of Kaaba temple and other temples are invited to make the trip as guests of Kaaba temple. The return will be made shortly before midnight.

The natives of the Andaman Islands average three feet, eleven inches in height and weigh under 70 pounds.

NO SEPARATE PEACE UNLESS PEOPLE ORDER

(Continued from Page One.)

sively in matters of that kind. Congress can't under our constitution enter into communication or negotiation with foreign governments.

Can't Veto Mere Request.

Thus, broadly speaking, President Wilson cannot veto the Knox resolution merely because it expresses an opinion or requests him to adopt a certain course. And before the resolution is finally passed by the senate the fact that congress "requests" rather than "orders" the executive branch of the government to safeguard all claims or rights which would otherwise come to us under the treaty of Versailles itself will be emphasized, and all constitutional or technical objections to the Knox resolution will have been removed.

The president would have to choose some general ground for vetoing the Knox resolution. And he could say that the treaty of Versailles is already in operation and that he believes it to be the best compromise agreement that can be obtained and a more advantageous pact to the United States than a separate peace with Germany. He could moreover refuse to negotiate with Germany separately, arguing that it would be a violation of the terms of the armistice agreement signed by all the associated powers as the basis of peace and a withdrawal of our moral obligation to stand with the allies with whom we fought the war.

Democratic Favor Repeal.

But the task of vetoing a message whose main action is merely a repeal of domestic legislation and a request for a new treaty is not going to be an easy one for the president and the Democratic party. Indeed, house Democrats themselves proposed a substitute

resolution repealing wartime laws. From the president's viewpoint, it might be more comfortable not to sign the joint resolution at all but allow it to become law after the lapse of 10 days and then to send back to the senate the treaty of Versailles as his defiant answer to the request for a separate peace with Germany. This would throw the whole matter into the campaign as the president on the one hand and Senator Lodge on the other, are eager to do. But the request for a "separate peace with Germany" was denounced by President Wilson on his western trip and from the statement issued by Homer Cummings, the Democratic national chairman, it is apparent that the Democrats will try to revive the wartime hate of Germany by refusing to "beg the Huns to make a separate peace." On the other hand, the demand in the allied countries for a revision of the treaty of Versailles has been taken up to some extent in the United States and there are political groups who would be quick to contend that hope of forcing a revision of the Versailles treaty lies in

the negotiation of a separate peace with Germany.

No Separate Peace.

Senator Knox speaks on Wednesday in defense of his resolution. Administration Democrats led by Senators Hitchcock and Underwood will make reply. There will be plenty of talk for the next month possibly a repeal of some of the wartime laws, but no commercial agreements or treaties with Germany or Austria until the American people at the polls next November have decided whether they want the treaty of Versailles, with reservations or interpretations or a new treaty with Germany altogether.

The Polish alphabet contains 45 letters.

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